

## Message Text

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42

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 SCCT-02 SY-04

OMB-01 IGA-02 NIC-01 DRC-01 SCA-01 SCS-03 PC-10 OPR-02

A-01 /147 W

----- 076738

R 081210Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3070

INFO AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

AMCONSUL SONGKHLA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 7462

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : PGOV, PINT, SOCI, TH

SUBJECT : KIDNAPPED MISSIONARIES IN SOUTH THAILAND

REF: A. BANGKOK 7383

B. FBIS BANGKOK D080336Z MAY 74

C. FBIS BANGKOK D080229Z MAY 74

D. FBIS BANGKOK D080335Z MAY 74

E. FBIS BANGKOK D080255Z MAY 74

SUMMARY: THE THAI PRESS CONTINUES TO SPECULATE ABOUT THE  
IDENTITY OF THE KIDNAPPERS OF THE TWO WOMEN MISSIONARIES  
IN SOUTHERN THAILAND. THE CABINET ANNOUNCED WHAT APPEARS  
TO BE A SLIGHT INCREASE IN THE AUTHORITY OF MAJOR GENERAL SAN  
CHITAPATIMA, COMMANDER OF THE FIFTH MILITARY CIRCLE.  
THE PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR WILL RAISE THE SUBJECT OF  
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VOLUNTEERS' SAFETY WITH THE RTG MAY 9. END SUMMARY.

1. THE THAI PRESS CONTINUES TO SPECULATE ABOUT THE IDENTITY OF, AND PURPOSE BEHIND THE KIDNAPPING OF THE ONE ENGLISH AND ONE NEW ZEALAND MISSIONARY IN SOUTH THAILAND (REF A). REF B IS MUSLIM SEPARATIST LEADER PHO SU'S REPORTED DENIAL OF ANY INVOLVEMENT. REF C SAYS THAT SPECIAL BRANCH POLICE COMMANDER, COLONEL ARI KARIBUT, WILL TRAVEL SOUTH TO EXPLORE THE MOTIVES BEHIND THE KIDNAPPINGS, AND CONTINUES THAT THE MISSIONARIES ARE IN THE HANDS OF ANOTHER SEPARATIST, PHO YEH. THE ARTICLE SPECULATES THAT THE PATTANI LIBERATION FRONT STAGED THE KIDNAPPINGS TO DRAW FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM LIBYA.

2. NEWSPAPERS HAVE FOR SOME TIME DECRIED DECLINING SECURITY IN SOUTHERNMOST THAILAND. STUDENTS, RETURNING FROM THE SOUTH AFTER THEIR ASSIGNMENTS IN THE RTG DEMOCRACY TEACHING PROGRAM, CRITICIZED POLICE COLLUSION WITH LAWLESS ELEMENTS THERE. THE "BANGKOK POST" EDITORIALIZES (REF D) THAT THE RECENT KIDNAPPING ILLUSTRATE THAT LOCAL AUTHORITIES CANNOT HANDLE THE SITUATION. IT CALLS FOR STRONG GOVERNMENT ACTION ON ONE HAND, AND SYMPATHY TO THE SENSITIVITIES OF THAILAND'S MUSLIM MINORITY ON THE OTHER.

3. REFERENCE E CLAIMS THAT THE CABINET GAVE MAJOR GENERAL SAN CHITAPATIMA, FIFTH MILITARY CIRCLE COMMANDER, WIDE POWERS TO RESTORE ORDER IN THE SOUTH. THE CHINESE PRESS, HOWEVER, DOES NOT REPORT, AS DOES REFERENCE D, THAT SAN HAS THE POWER TO TRANSFER CIVILIAN, POLICE, OR MILITARY OFFICIALS. THE CHINESE PAPERS SAY INSTEAD THAT HE IS TO HEAD A COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF POLICE MAJOR GENERAL PHONGSAK PRANUTNORAPHAN, DEPUTY PROVINCIAL POLICE COMMISSIONER; THE GOVERNORS OF YALA, NARATHIWAT, AND PATTANI; AND POLICE GENERAL AMPHORN CHITAPATIMA, POLICE REGION 9 COMMANDER (AND SAN'S BROTHER). THE CABINET'S NEW MANDATE APPEARS TO STRENGTHEN SAN'S COORDINATION ROLE RATHER THAN GIVE HIM MORE POWER.

4. MARTIN RIDGEON, THE BRITISH PRESS ATTACHE, CONFERRED WITH US ABOUT HOW HE WOULD ANSWER PRESS INQUIRIES MAY 8, AND WE CONTINUE IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE BRITISH EMBASSY.

5. THEPEACE CORPS DIRECTOR WILL RAISE THE SUBJECT OF  
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VOLUNTEERS' SAFETY WITH RTG OFFICIALS MAY 9, AFTER THE MAY 8 WISAKHABUCHA HOLIDAY. THERE ARE FIVE VOLUNTEERS TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE PROVINCIAL CAPITALS OF THE FOUR PROVINCES. ANOTHER VOLUNTEER IS ATTACHED TO THE REGIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTER IN YALA. NONE OF THESE ASSIGNMENTS UNNECESSARILY EXPOSES THE VOLUNTEERS.  
KINTNER

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## Message Attributes

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